

July 2011 Overview

Yosemite Backcountry Trail Crew

Mark Allee: Supervisor

July found us picking up the pieces after a camp move gone wrong. Fortunately, with perseverance and good spirits we did our best to settle in to our beautiful new home. A vehicle accident (thankfully with no injuries), torrential rain, and the emergency closure of our main supply route hampered our efforts to restore normalcy, as did the tragic drownings at Wampama Bridge. Fear not, no corpsmembers were involved, and don't believe everything you read in the news. The Red Dawn General saved one life for sure and maybe others that cold June morning but had to look death in the face in order to do so. He risked his own life in a daring rescue attempt that was sadly too late, 2 hikers perished but 3 survived. He returned to a supportive and loving crew grateful to be alive and bringing forth a message of swift water safety that the crew already knew so well. Only cross creeks, streams, and rivers if it is safe to do so and always unclip your sternum strap and waistbelt.

What a gift to be alive here on earth and in such a beautiful place as Yosemite no less. I am reminded of a quote by Joseph Campbell - "The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are." And who are we? Mt. men and Mt. women, conservationists, and hard rock warriors in training. We are Yosemite and we have arrived in the backcountry.

In July we discover the struggle in our hero's journey. The speed bump on the way to paradise. July is The Wall and we hit it full throttle. Logistics, change, crew dynamics, change, heat, complacency, illness, bureaucracy, change, scheduling, and tough trail maintenance stood in our way only to be tackled and overcome by the spirit of the bear and the strength of our commitment. One crew lumbers on toward greatness.

In our moment of need the CCC and National Park Service rallied around us sending food, supplies and gear by helicopter and boat. Special thanks to the Hetch Hetchy Ranger Office for all the support and boat rides. Mikey, Amber, and Andy were even treated to a boat trip into the cavernous mouth of Rancheria Creek and all the way out to the headwaters itself. WOW! Thanks Ranger Dan.

In work we fan out from City Camp to the north and east working trail out towards Hat Creek and Pleasant Valley, up switchbacks to magical Tiltill Valley, and downstream to Omaha Beach. We put a tremendous effort into our camp move and it showed in the quality of our new setup and in the rehab work we did cleaning up our old Foresta home. With 6 miles up and 6 miles back, Hat Creek is serving up a punishing daily routine of coenoethus brushwork from dawn until dusk. Hardest week of the season? Some say yes. We plan to settle the grudge match with a spike for the last week of the month.

On the home front we celebrated Dr Morgan's bday with a piñata and a sporting game of capture the flag. Happy Birthday Morgan! Loni showed off her Irish Dance skills during her entertaining class. Highlight was Emily crushing the competition in the dance-off. Javi shared his knot-tying prowess during

his thorough class contributing to the crew's growing repertoire of life-saving knots. Surprise! Mark even learned a thing or two. What? A knot that the Red Dawn General doesn't know. Impossible!

We finished reading "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" and began sharing our life stories. Mark led classes in communication including a marathon 7-hour long seminar on giving and receiving positive and constructive feedback thanks to the Cascadia Leadership Training. We hope to see it put to good use. Anna wrapped it up with her monthly total back health class. Thanks Anna!

Javi's planned guests were stymied by the Wampama Bridge closure. Sorry guys. Karlson came out at the perfect time to visit and do some PTSD psych testing on the Red Dawn General. The report was inconclusive due to the fact that "he's just as crazy as ever. I am eternally grateful for the support and protection Karl. Please keep it up. During his visit we were shocked to learn that postage had gone up again and that deep in his heart Karlson was actually a Packers fan. Thanks for sharing your true self.

For fun the crew hiked over 50 miles on weekend jaunts accessing wondrous Tiltill Valley, the expansive granite basins of Lake Vernon, buggy hat Creek, far-reaching Pleasant Valley, the familiar shores of Lake Eleanor, and cross-countrying out to the empowering Le Conte Point. To top it all off we celebrated our recuperation weekend with a memorable and stately backcountry wedding on the banks of Rancheria Creek.

Much gratitude to our sponsors Jeremy, Felipe, and Anna, and all the NPS support staff including Tim and Shari. Dankeschön to our resident kitchen artist and nutritional ninja Evelyn for feeding us well. – Thanks to Phil for keeping us all in the backcountry and to Tessa for all the answers and supplies. Thanks to the Fortuna Center staff for their continued support and assistance. Much thanks to all our friends and families for the care packages and mail. Your love and support keep us going strong. Moms: send more cookies please! Gracias to our packers Chris and DeeAnna for the long-awaited mule train. Keep 'em coming please. Special thanks to all of you who have shared your concern and support for the Red Dawn General. Never fear! He's right where he needs to be.

Until next time, stay classy frontcountry.

-Love, Yosemite

CREW QUOTES FOR JULY:

Andy – "The early bird may get the worm but raccoons just eat garbage."

Mira – "Make friends with things other than people."

Mikey – "Don't knock it till you rock it."

Erin – "The pinecones here are great."

Dustin – "I hate pushups."

Loni – "Never assume that Emily is only going to put 1 or 2 braids in her hair."

Morgan – “Symbolism is weightless.”

Javi – “Keep it solid.”

Amber – “No matter what side of the creek you’re on you are always going uphill on the other side.”

Emily – “It’s nice to sit down.”

Javan – “Mind over matter and then it’s just a matter of time.”

Aaron – “The moon is made of green cheese.”